

Message Text

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FOLLOWING REPEAT SAN JOSE 2050 SENT ACTION SECSTATE DTD 21 MAY
QUOTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SAN JOSE 2050

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, CS

SUBJECT: THE TRADE ACT AND THE TOME CONVENTION

1. THE CHIEF OF THE ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL SECTION MET
WITH ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER ROMAN MAY 16 TO DISCUSS THE U.S.
TRADE ACT AND IN PARTICULAR TO CLEAR UP SOME MISUNDERSTANDINGS
HELD BY MR. ROMAN CONCERNING THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE
TRADE ACT MIGHT LIMIT COSTA RICA'S SHIPMENTS OF BANANAS AND
FROZEN BEEF. EMBOFF REVIEWED FOR ROMAN THE WORKINGS OF THE
SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES AND ASSURED HIM THAT NEITHER BANANAS
NOR FRESH OR FROZEN BEEF WOULD BE AFFECTED. EMBOFF ALSO
TOLD HIM THAT FINAL LIST HAS NOT YET BEEN DEVELOPED BUT
THAT THERE MIGHT BE A PROBLEM WITH SUGAR, IF IT IS DECIDED
TO PLACE SUGAR ON THE PREFERENCE LIST.

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2. ROMAN WAS VERY GRATEFUL FOR THE ASSURANCES OFFERED AND

STATED THAT THE COSTA RICAN GOVERNMENT WISHES TO TAKE A POSITIVE APPROACH TO THE U.S. TRADE ACT. HE SAID SAHAT THE PROCESS OF LOOKING FOR WAYS UNDER WHICH COSTA RICA COULD BEST TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PREFERENCES BEING OFFERED BY THE U.S. WAS ALREADY UNDERWAY. THERE HAD BEEN A MEETING TWO DAYS EARLIER OF THE NATIONAL EXPORT COUNCIL, WHICH HAD CONSIDERED THIS SUBJECT, AND HE HOPED TO INVITE THE CHIEF OF THE EMBASSY'S ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL SECTION TO A SUBSEQUENT MEETING OF THAT BODY IN ORDER TO CONTINUE THE FORWARD MOVEMENT. MR. OGG EXPRESSED GREAT INTEREST IN MEETING WITH THE GROUP IN VIEW OF THE IMPORTANCE OF COSTA RICA MOVING AHEAD IN THIS AREA TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PREFERENCES THAT LAST ONLY TEN YEARS UNDER THE LAW.

3. MR. ROMAN EXPRESSED GREAT CONCERN ABOUT THE DISCRIMINATORY FEATURES OF THE LOME CONVENTION. HE SAID THAT COSTA RICA WOULD CONTINUE TO FOLLOW UP THIS SUBJECT. HE WONDERED WHY THE U.S. SHOULD GIVE NON-DISCRIMINATORY PREFERENCES TO AFRICAN COUNTRIES WHEN THEY RECEIVE PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT, TO THE DETRIMENT OF LATIN AMERICA, FROM THE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMON MARKET. EMBOFF EXPLAINED THAT THE U.S.G. FAVORS NON-DISCRIMINATORY GENERALIZED PREFERENCES FOR DEVELOPING NATIONS AND HAD URGED THIS COURSE ON OTHER DEVELOPED NATIONS. EMBOFF SAID THIS WOULD APPEAR TO BE MORE A MATTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN ACTION THAN FOR ACTION BY THE USG. ROMAN SAID THAT COSTA RICA MAY ATTEMPT TO ORGANIZE A UNITED FRONT OF LATIN AMERICAN NATIONS TO ASK THAT U.S. PREFERENCES BE LIFTED FROM THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH RECEIVE DISCRIMINATORY PREFERENCES UNDER THE LOME CONVENTION.

4. ROMAN SAID THAT HE WOULD ANTICIPATE DIFFICULTY IN GETTING A COMMON FRONT IN LATIN AMERICA BECAUSE SOME NATIONS HAVE AN EXAGGERATED AND ARTIFICIALLY NATIONALISTIC APPROACH THAT WOULD MAKE THEM RELUCTANT TO PROPOSE ANYTHING THAT MIGHT APPEAR TO INCREASE ALLEGED DEPENDENCE ON THE U.S. IN ROMAN'S VIEW, HOWEVER, DEPENDENCE IS NOT INVOLVED IN THE QUESTION AND LATIN AMERICA WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO LOOK OUT FOR ITS TRUE COMMERCIAL INTERESTS RATHER THAN TAKE A SO-CALLED NATIONALISTIC STANCE.

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